

Knowledge, People & Risk

Breakout Session # 1204

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John Milam, President, Dynamis LLC

Date Tuesday, April 14, 2008

Time 10:45-11:45



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ENSURING TRUST IN THE
ACQUISITION PROCESS
THROUGH PEOPLE,
TEAMS, AND TOOLS.

Knowledge, People & Risk

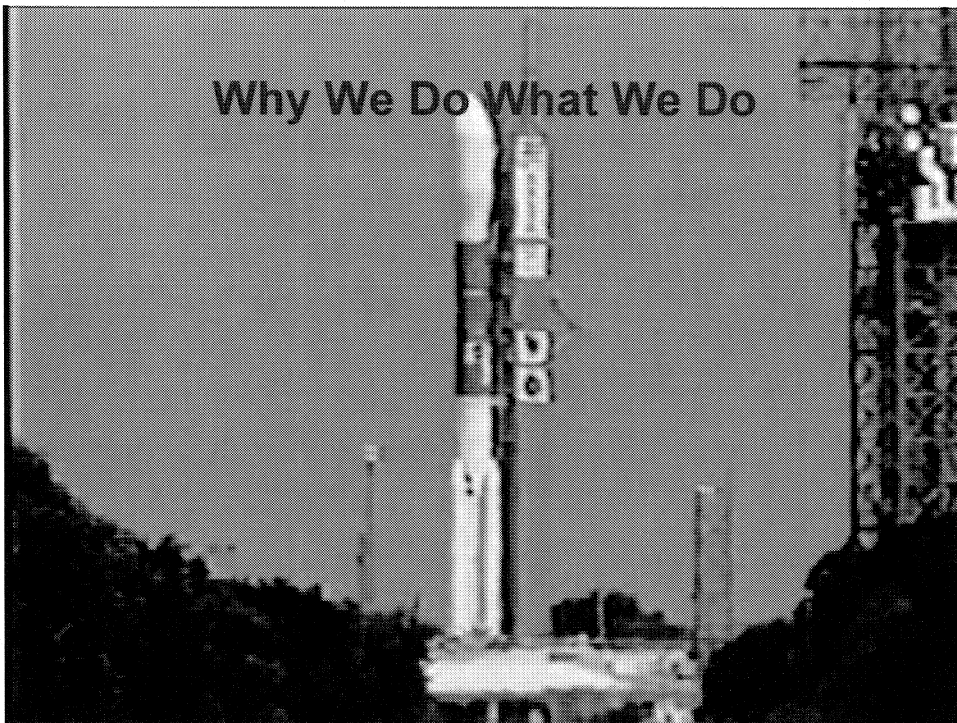
- NASA's mandate is to take risks to go into space while applying our best knowledge
- Only people apply knowledge to risk
- To apply knowledge to risk, people must be fully engaged in the mission and organization
- They have to trust that the system works
- So, how can we make it work better?



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Why We Do What We Do



NASA's Knowledge

- Scientific Insights from Research
- Engineering Wisdom from Experience
- Project Management Skills
- Safety and Team Consciousness
- Institutional Support and Collaboration



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The Role of Contracting at NASA

- 80% of NASA's budget goes to contractors
- Contracting is a critical aspect of space missions. Large complicated contracts with no 'do-overs' allowed
- Often few players; specialized skills



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NASA Learning Philosophy

- Create Conversation Opportunities
 - Instill workplace practices of conversing
 - Force the articulation of stories
 - Explanation of events; consequences
 - Requires fleshing out context of decisions
 - Collect in the form of Case Studies



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Why Stories and Case Studies?

- Technical Engineering Obstacles
- Integration Challenges
- Team Deliberations and Decisions
- External Circumstances
- Partnerships and Relationships
- Policy, Procedure and Safety Concerns



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Three Challenges for Sharing

- What shows people what to share?
- What equips people how to share?
- What motivates people why to share?

Personal Knowledge Strategies are
Determined by Organizational
Members' Implicit Theory of
Knowledge Utilization.



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Increase Internal Depth Perception

If people have a good grasp of what
the organization is all about they will
be more likely to openly share and
communicate with each other.

I can see how what I know matters to others.



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Keep Communication Open

If people are satisfied with the communication systems and processes in place they will be more likely to openly share and communicate with each other.

I am hearing the whole story, and if I take the time to speak something happens.



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Reward Fairly (and Punish Fairly)

If people perceive the organizational employment game to be fair and open they will be more likely to openly share and communicate with each other.

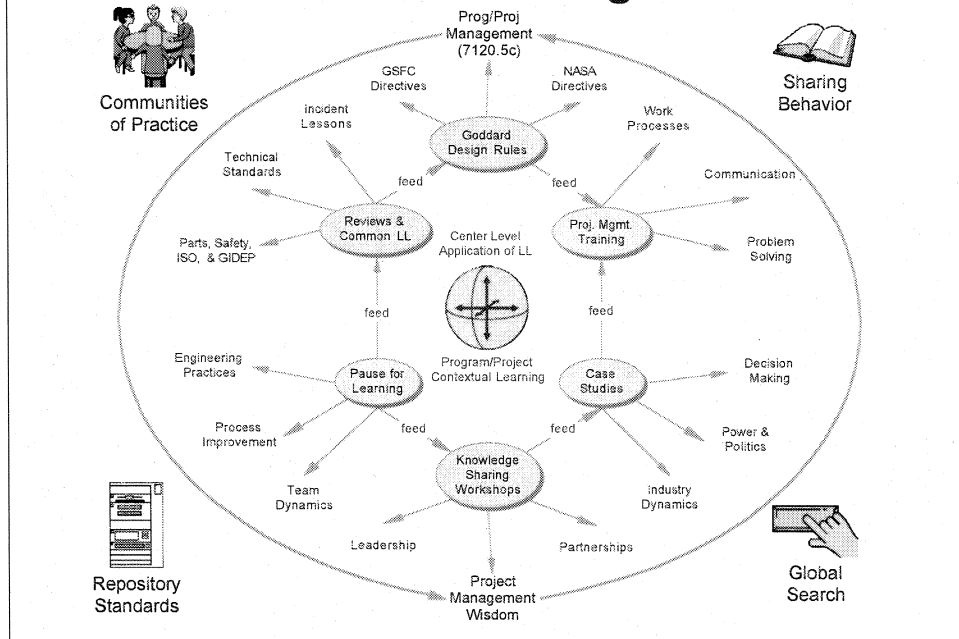
If I work hard, it matters.



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The NASA GSFC Learning Architecture



Pause And Learn

- Adapted the AAR process for use inside NASA.
- Piloted with several projects
- Kept it simple
- Showed how it can deliver value



WHITE PAPER



Pause And Learn:
Adapting the Army After Action Review Process to the NASA Project World at the Goddard Space Flight Center

Developed at the
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center
Knowledge Management Office

by
Dr. Edward W. Rogers

May 20, 2004
Revised May 10, 2005



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Knowledge Sharing Workshops

- Team to Team
- Within the Center
- Panel Discussions of What Happened?
- Mission Success Celebrations
- Topical Concerns/Cross Cutting Issues
- Outside (Public) Conferences

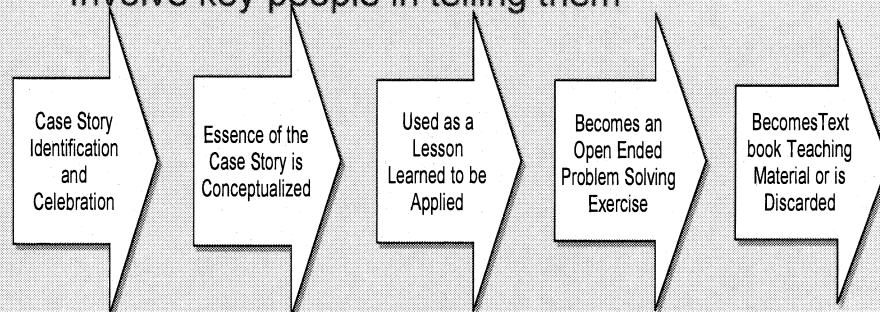


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Life Cycle of a Case Story

- Write your own case studies
- Identify the learning and embed it in stories
- Involve key people in telling them



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The MSES II Re compete Story

- Very Strong Stakeholders
 - Internal Customers
 - Embedded Contractors
- A Challenge to “Do the Right Thing”
- A Surprising Result
- The Lessons Learned



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Fixed Price vs Cost Plus

- TDRSS Acquisition Case Study
 - Same Issues Today
 - Same Arguments For and Against
- The Case Study Panel
 - Procurement
 - Legal
 - Project Office



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Learning Practices Build Trust

- Pause and Learn at the Team Level
- Workshops at the Center Level
- Cases at the Agency Level
- Publishing (ASK Magazine and Academic)
- The Sequence is Essential for Preserving Trust and Building the Relationships that Foster Sharing at all Levels



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Success !



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